Taylor Merryman Literature Portfolio

Book: Charlotte’s Web

Author: E.B. White

Genre: Fiction

Grade Level: 3-6

Summary: Charlotte’s Web is about a young girl names Fern who lives on a farm with her family. She saves a pig who was the runt of the litter from her father’s axe claiming it was unjust and she could take care of him. Once Wilbur (the pig) gets to be too big for the farm house, her parents decide he should move to Fern’s Uncle’s farm. There he becomes friends with the other animals but finds his best friend to be a spider named Charlotte. Charlotte begins to write amazing things about the pig in her web, which ultimately saves his life.

Reflection: This book was a favorite of mine in the third grade. You really connect with the characters like Fern who fights to save Wilbur or Charlotte who is a kind friend when Wilbur most needs one. It’s a great story to teach children right from wrong and how to be a friend to others.

Book: Ramona’s World

Author: Beverly Cleary

Genre: Fiction

Grade Level: 3-5

Summary: Ramona’s World is about a young girl going into the fourth grade and all the different changes she is experiencing. There are a lot of ups and downs for her throughout the entire year. She has a lot of trouble coping with her new baby sister Roberta who gets all the attention, and her older sister Beezus who just stared high school and is the “responsible” one. She makes a new friend who she really connects with and finds her to be an outlet from her family. Over time she realized that her sister is not always perfect and that in the end everything turns out alright.

Reflection: This was my favorite Ramona book growing up. I found it so easy to relate with Ramona’s character making me want to read it over and over. I loved how she went through the same problems I was going through as a fourth grader and reading the way she handled her problems helped me handle mine. This is a great read for any girl from 3rd to 4th grade.

Book: All Robots Must Die: Nacho-Geddon

Author: Chad Derdowski

Genre: Science Fiction

Grade Level: 3-5

Summary: In this book, two young boys named Elroy and Jake wake up in a mysterious room with no recollection of how they got there or where they are. All they know is they hate robots and they love nachos. The two don’t agree on many things but they work together to fight robots and save a princess who was captured. In the end they learn what true friendship is as well as teamwork.

Reflection: This book is great for any sci-fi loving boy. It is packed with adventure and suspense. There is something new in each chapter which is sure to keep any young boy’s attention. It’s also packed with a ton of jocks and crazy made up characters that keep the story really interesting.

Book: A Wrinkle In Time

Author: Madeleine L’Engle

Genre: Science Fiction

Grade Level: 6-8

Summary: A Wrinkle In Time is about a young troublesome girl, Meg, whose father has gone missing after conduction some mysterious experiments. With the help from her younger brother Charles Wallace and school mate Calvin O’Keef, they travel through time to save her father. Her strange neighbors Mrs. Whatsit, Mrs. Who, and Mrs. Which help them along their journey. While on their journey they learn that the universe I threatened by “the dark thing” and this is what their father is fighting. Meg learns that the dark thing only feeds on hate but the power of her love for her brother and father help them defeat it, and they make it safely back to earth.

Reflection: This is a great science fiction book that leaves you in suspense. You want to find out what is going to happen to the universe as well as Meg’s father. This book has many surprising factors like traveling through time and space that left me mesmerized and rooting for the three children trying to find Meg father.

Book: The Diary of a Young Girl

Author: Anne Frank

Genre: Non Fiction

Grade Level: 6-8

Summary: This is the famous story of a young Jewish girl named Anne Frank. She and her family are forced into hiding so that they will not be taken away to concentration camps during the time of the Holocaust. She writes all about the hardships she endures such as hunger, boredom, and constantly having to stay quiet. She tells us about herself, her family and how unfair her situation. We get a glimpse of how hard it was to survive as a Jew during those times and the measures this family took just to continue living.

Reflection: This is an amazing book that all children should read at one point. While it obviously doesn’t do justice on just how hard it was to survive during those times, you do get a small taste of what had to be done to continue living with your family. It is an important piece of literature that will help kids see what it was like for Jewish people during the Holocaust.

Book: Bones: Skeletons and How They Work

Author: Steve Jenkins

Genre: Non Fiction

Grade Level: 3-5

Summary: This book is packed full of information on bones. It gives plenty of facts about the human body along with many actual size examples of our bones. There are also a lot of animal bone facts and even comparisons to our bones such as weight, size, function and a lot more.

Reflection: This is such a cool book to use to teach children about bones. The illustrations alone will catch their attention and give them lots of interesting facts. I especially liked how it included animal bone functions and comparisons.

Book: The Three Little Pigs

Author: James Marshall

Genre: Fairytale

Grade Level: K-1

Summary: This is the classic story of three little pigs that are on their own for the first time. The first makes a house of straw, the second makes a house of sticks, and the third makes a house of bricks. A wolf later comes along and is able to blow down the first two houses down, eating the two pigs up. When he can’t blow the last pig’s house down he tries to get the pig to come to the fair but each time they try to meet the pig outsmarts him. When he almost gets caught by the wolf one day he escapes home and when the wolf tries to come down the chimney to get him he jumps into a pot of boiling water.

Reflection: This book is a cool retold version of the three little pigs. The illustrations and funny dialogue were cute and made it a good read, something that young children will like to read over and over again.

Book: Goldilocks and the Three Bears

Author: James Marshall

Genre: Fairytale

Grade: K-1

Summary: This is a contemporary classic of the young girl who does exactly what she pleases. Upon wandering in the woods she finds a house which she lets herself into. After sampling three bowls of porridge, sitting on three chairs (and breaking one), then trying out three different beds, she falls asleep in the smallest one she find that is just right. But little does she know that the house belongs to three bears that come home to find her asleep in the baby bear’s bed.

Reflection: This is a really great book with more great illustrations by James Marshall. It is also another great fairy tale that children will love to read.

Book: Butterflies

Author: Thea Feldman

Genre: Informational

Grade: K-1

Summary: This book gives a bunch of interesting facts on butterflies. It talks about the scales on their wings, how they feel with their feet, and the transformation they make from caterpillar to butterfly. It gives a wide variety of the different butterflies you will find outside.

Reflection: This is a great book to introduce to children about information and the cycle of butterflies. It gives clear explanations on their transformation as well as how they survive outside in the wilderness.

Book: Ladybugs

Author: Gail Gibbons

Genre: Informational

Grade: K-1

Summary: This book talks about all the different types of ladybugs, which are around 5,000 different kinds. It discusses their different stages of development, their characteristics, and how they live. It also includes other interesting facts like their favorite insects and plants to eat.

Reflection: This book is a great tool to help children understand the different stages of a ladybug’s and how they survive. It is filled with a lot of great pictures of a variety of different ladybugs.

Book: If You Give a Mouse a Cookie

Author: Laura Numeroff

Genre: Picture Book

Grade Level: K-3

Summary: A young boy befriends a mouse and offers him a cookie. After receiving the cookie the mouse needs a glass of milk. He continues asking the boy for the things he needs throughout the rest of the day. Each task relating to the last, it begins to seem like the needy mouse will never be satisfied. By the end of the day we are right back where we started with a glass of milk and a cookie.

Reflection: This is a great correlation book filled with funny twists and turns. Each page brings on a new and silly the task that the mouse is asking the boy to do. Any child will love reading this book and following along with the illustrations that depict exactly what is going on in the text.